



Iowa General Assembly

2006 Committee Briefings

Legislative Services Agency – Legal Services Division

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CAPITAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Meeting Dates: [August 17, 2006](#) | [July 19, 2006](#)

Purpose. *This compilation of briefings on legislative interim committee meetings and other meetings and topics of interest to the Iowa General Assembly, written by the Legal Services Division staff of the nonpartisan Legislative Services Agency, describes committee activities or topics. The briefings were originally distributed in the Iowa Legislative Interim Calendar and Briefing. Official minutes, reports, and other detailed information concerning the committee or topic addressed by a briefing can be obtained from the committee's Internet page listed above, from the Iowa General Assembly's Internet page at <http://www.legis.state.ia.us>, or from the agency connected with the meeting or topic described.*

CAPITAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

August 17, 2006

Chairperson: Senator Thomas Courtney

Vice Chairperson: Representative Libby Jacobs

Overview. The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) presented information relating to the construction of a new state office building to replace the Wallace state office building, the construction of a new Iowa Utilities Board/Office of Consumer Advocate building, the location of the state vehicle fleet, potential property acquisitions related to the West Capitol Terrace Project, and the potential purchase of the Mercy Capitol property. Mr. Mark Willemssen, Legislative Facilities Manager, presented information relating to renovations within the Capitol Building including the statehouse cafeteria.

New State Office Building—Potential Occupants and Sites. Ms. Mollie Anderson, Director of DAS, provided summary information relating to potential occupants of the new 350,000-square-foot state office building that will be built to replace the Wallace state office building. She stated that proposed occupants for the new building include the current occupants of the Wallace building that occupy 119,902 square feet and other state entities housed in privately leased facilities in Polk County which includes office, storage, and training facility space that totals 512,212 square feet. She stated that recommendations in regard to which leased entities will be chosen to occupy the new state office building will be based on certain factors including funding sources, square footage, and the expiration dates of office leases. Committee members discussed the need to examine the types of tenants that are chosen to occupy the new state office building to enhance the ability of the public to access state government offices in one location.

Director Anderson discussed possible sites for the new state office building and stated that gravel parking lot 17 north of the Capitol on the Capitol Complex grounds overlooking I-235 is a priority site under consideration. She stated that certain factors developed for site selection include traffic patterns and the proximity of the site to parking areas. She also stated that the City of Des Moines is very interested in working on a possible shuttle service to the Capitol Complex area to help address parking concerns. Chairperson Courtney noted that a letter supporting a city shuttle service or other regularly scheduled means of transportation was sent to City Manager Richard Clark on the Committee's behalf.

Iowa Utilities Board/Office of Consumer Advocate Building. Director Anderson provided information about the construction of a model energy-efficient building to be used as a teaching tool about the value of energy conservation. This building will house the Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) and the Office of the Consumer Advocate and would accommodate approximately 100 employees. The DAS priority site for this building is based upon flexibility, solar access, and the possibility of multiple building configurations among other factors, and is located east of the Capitol Complex maintenance building and parking lot 3 on the south end of the Capitol Complex grounds on the grassy area on E. 14th Street. Authority was provided to issue bonds to finance the project and current projections indicate the costs, which will be charged to utilities, will not exceed the amount paid for leased space.

Capitol Planning Commission. Director Anderson noted that the Capitol Planning Commission has endorsed both DAS recommended priority sites for the new state office building and the Iowa Utilities Board/Office of Consumer Advocate building.

State Vehicle Fleet. Mr. Paul Carlson, Chief Operating Officer, DAS General Services Enterprise, provided information about the state vehicle fleet. He stated that DAS typically has 220 auction (retired) or new vehicles and 80 day trip vehicles all housed in the state parking structure at E. Grand and Pennsylvania Avenues. He recommended moving the auction and new vehicles to parking lot 17 immediately after the September 15 state vehicle fleet auction as a temporary measure to open up additional slots in the parking structure. He recommended leaving the day trip vehicles in the parking structure because of the increased security available for state employees returning the motor pool vehicles, among other reasons.

West Capitol Terrace Project. Director Anderson provided information about the acquisition of properties at the west end of the West Capitol Terrace Project area at the intersection of E. 7th and E. Locust Streets. She stated that DAS made an offer to purchase the row house located at 709 E. Locust for \$412,000, which was accepted. An appraisal has been completed on the property located at 711 E. Locust owned by the Iowa Association of Community College Trustees. She stated Iowa State Bank has agreed to buy the building with an option for DAS to buy the building.

Mercy Capitol Hospital. Director Anderson stated DAS hopes to have an appraisal of the Mercy Capitol building, located at E. 12th and Des Moines Streets, soon. She stated this purchase would require additional funding from the state. She stated her opinion that both the land and the building have value to the state because of the proximity of the building to the Capitol Complex and discussed the possibility of a potential revenue stream for the state from the buildings on the property, which has yet to be determined. Committee members expressed some concern with the value of the building to the state, but agreed that more information is needed.

Capitol Building Improvements and Renovations. Mr. Willemsen provided information relating to improvements and renovation projects within the Capitol. He stated that all mezzanines have now been removed and that the north rotunda elevator and second and third floor renovations will be completed by December 1. He stated that Committee Room 116 will be equipped with a sound system and new carpet tiles. He also provided information relating to the removal and relocation of the cafeteria kitchen and serving areas on the ground floor level of the Capitol. He stated that the construction contract has been signed and that the cafeteria should be completed by the end of December or mid-January at the latest. Mr. Willemsen provided a draft copy of the emergency evacuation plan for each floor of the Capitol that will be posted throughout the Capitol. He also noted that the east exterior steps are settling, and as part of addressing this problem, plans are to relocate electrical transformers in vaults under those steps.

Next Meeting. Committee members present at the meeting decided no additional meetings are necessary during this legislative interim period. Chairperson Courtney expressed his desire to call a meeting of the Committee at the beginning of the 2007 Legislative Session.

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CAPITAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

July 19, 2006

Chairperson: Senator Thomas Courtney

Vice Chairperson: Representative Libby Jacobs

Overview. The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) presented information relating to Capitol complex parking issues, the West Capitol Terrace Project, and the acquisition of additional land for the Capitol complex grounds.

Capitol Complex Parking. Ms. Mollie Anderson, Director of DAS, provided information to the Committee requested by the Legislative Council during the Council's June 16, 2006, meeting concerning the parking situation at the Capitol complex. The information presented included a review of current parking facilities including the state parking garage at East Grand and Pennsylvania Avenues that opened in February 2003, information concerning the permanent relocation of the DAS vehicle fleet, and information pertaining to both public, employee, and handicapped parking at the Capitol complex. Ms. Anderson noted that there are no long-term plans to provide tunnel access to any of the parking locations on the Capitol complex grounds. Ms. Anderson stated that DAS is currently working with Grubb & Ellis, a real estate consultant, to locate property close to the Capitol complex to find a permanent location for the state vehicle fleet which includes both public and private land acquisition considerations.

West Capitol Terrace Project/Land Acquisition. Ms. Anderson reported that removal of the parking lots west of the Capitol and construction of the Central Plaza in that same space (phase one of the West Capitol Terrace Project) began on July 17, 2006. This first phase is expected to be completed by June 2007 in time for the Hy-Vee Triathlon, which is

scheduled to end at the west steps of the Capitol. Ms. Anderson presented information concerning three properties located at the west end of the West Capitol Terrace project area at the intersection of East 7th and East Locust Streets that are being considered for acquisition by DAS to complete the West Capitol Terrace Project. She stated that the owners of all three properties at 707, 709, and 711 E. Locust are private owners. The property located at 709 E. Locust is an 1880s row house and possibly the only surviving row house in the Capitol complex area. The current owner of the row house would like to see the building preserved and DAS has suggested this building could be used as the State Capitol's Visitors Center as an alternative to using the Carriage House on Des Moines Street. Ms. Anderson stated that the General Assembly appropriated \$500,000 to acquire these properties, but that additional resources are needed. She suggested that a certain parcel of land south of the Capitol building (land at the foot of the popular sledding hill) be appraised to try to negotiate a land swap deal for one or more of the properties located at the foot of the West Capitol Terrace Project.

Additional Property Acquisition Options—Mercy Capitol Hospital Campus and Capitol Hill Lutheran Church. Ms. Anderson stated that Mercy Capitol Hospital, located at E. 12th and Des Moines Streets, is interested in selling the hospital building. Ms. Anderson indicated that DAS wants to continue to have discussions with Mercy Capitol representatives and is interested in exploring what this building and other buildings located on the Mercy Hospital Campus may be used for by the state if purchased by DAS, as well as the value of the assets, potential revenue streams for the state, and the value of the frontage property. Ms. Anderson also discussed a DAS proposal to purchase the Capitol Hill Lutheran Church located at 511 Des Moines Street.

Committee Action. Members of the Committee agreed by motion to support DAS in requesting the City of Des Moines to research opportunities for providing shuttle service for the general public to the Capitol complex during the legislative session, in making arrangements to have property appraised to negotiate a land swap deal for one of the three buildings at the foot of the West Capitol Terrace Project, and to work to preserve the row house building located at 709 E. Locust with the possibility of housing a state visitors center in the building.

Van Tour. Upon adjournment, DAS provided members of the Committee and legislative staff a driving tour of the Capitol complex grounds including parking areas.

Next Meeting. The next meeting of the Capital Projects Committee will be held on Tuesday, August 17, 2006, in Committee Room 22 of the Statehouse at 9:00 a.m.

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